

5/7/77

Mr. Les Whitten
1401 16 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Les,

Glad to talk to you to day.

There is a distinction I wish you could make: Among those you know I alone and not a "conspiracy theorist."

In recent years my tribe has increased by one, Howard Roffman, of whom I wrote you yesterday.

Of those lawyers I know who have interested themselves in political assassinations Jim Lesar alone is not such a theorist. I have never even heard him conjecture about whodunits.

So while I appreciate what you say when asked at colleges in terms of personal endorsement it misleads both the kids and the faculty to call me a conspiracy theorist.

I deal in fact. For years it has been in the context of the integrity of our basic institutions, never whodunit. How did they work, fail to work, what resulted, etc. My memory is not what it was but I can't remember not having to try to reassure an audience that John McCone did not off JFK and that Hoover did not do it to King.

Between the column on the one side and the "Ark Lanes" on the other this is not easy.

Or had it never occurred to you that the column is a conspiracy theorist? Back to Drew, back to the 1967 use of the column after the books beginning ^{with} mine were beginning to have an influence.

What is the relevance of the CIA's playing with the hoods to get Castro if not conspiracy theorizing? More recently the Rosselli and "Trafficante" stories.

As I've told George a couple of times lately the middle is a lonely place. He even accuses me of defending the FBI now. (I also sue 'em.)

If sometimes difficult to prove as a matter of fact conspiracy is uncomplicated. It is no more than a combination to do wrong. Two or more people in a crime. Less - a step in pursuance of that crime, a single overt act.

With these two assassinations if either was not beyond the capacity of one person it was a conspiracy. The actual evidence, not the bullshit that gets on the air and into papers and titillates, is that both crimes were more than one person could do.

Today's column mentions Odio, not just Vecchiana, the one I mentioned to you so you would know that part was not new. (I recall the earlier plant, if not clearly.) Now if you want to know the Odio story it is in my first work, the one with the blue cover. So and in the same chapter is the current stuff on "false" rather than "second" Oswalds. I followed it up later but that is the essence. She is sound but those who write and speak about her are not. If you want to follow up on Vecchiana's connections and will protect my vulnerable source first ask AFL-CIO and if that fails I'll tell you my source. He was then working on a doctorate. I opened up sources for him. Roumaldi was one.

If his memory is good Dan Kurzman might be a good source. He first exposed Roumaldi, outside the left-wing press. Particularly National Guardian of that day. But I believe this has no connection with the JFK assassination. What V. says today means nothing. Jack's pal Sturgis also "identified" an "Oswald" in Miami. Then. And falsely.

Thanks also for the offer with Curtis.

Best,

F.S., Les,

Lanes has gotten no mileage with a ripoff of a legitimate and significant record. But it is a ripoff, naturally from me.

And I published it and you have it, in Post Mortem.

It is a receipt by two FBI agents for "a missile" removed from JFK.

Getting it required time/and effort - years ago. I've been working on it a long time. As recently as 3/28, which is before Lane started trying to use it, Jim questioned some FBI agents we've been deposing, including about this. It is in the depositions.

My first knowledge was from Lonnie, who had phoned me to tell me a younger reporter on the News-American would be asking me about it. Lane had done some shows in Baltimore and I think held a press conference. He gave copies out, saying he had obtained them by FOIA litigation.

Derring-do.

But once I had obtained and published it certainly was the hard way!

Wouldn't be the first time. He conned the ACLU into filing an FOIA action to get a Ruby record that had not been secret. My first dated copy is of 1969. Then he held a press conference and actually got space. Last year, not 1969 or earlier.

If it is past time for him to come up with something, be careful. He hasn't yet.

HW